2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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(651) (654) (434) cash wage (Grigg, 1880, 34, 471; see above, pp. 149, 152).

Greatly increased contact with markets and with Europeans provided the impetus towards full participation in the cash economy, yet this transition took a century to complete. For the 178 vast majority the basic requirements of food, goods and services [177] continued to be provided either by their own efforts or by their Toda, Kota and Kurumba associates. The itinerant Chetti trader continued to make monthly visits, as he still does. From 1825 onwards Badagas could visit local markets on the plateau for what they had previously bought in Gunḍulupe:te and Ka:ramuḍu, but they never sold very much in the markets and thus rarely had (442) spare cash to spend. In the early days of cash-crop farming very few Badagas had enough knowledge or personal contacts to arrange the bulk sale of their produce in a distant market. They used to sell their crops instead to a broker in the Nilgiris, until it became known that a farmer who could find a market and negotiate a sale by himself would make bigger profits. An important motivation was the desire to acquire consumer goods that were now becoming available on a scale and in a variety (342) never before known to the Badagas. Later in the nineteenth century there is evidence of increasing affluence which found expression in the shift from thatched to tiled rooves. '... in 1871 only 1,914 houses out of the 13,922 in the district were tiled; whereas now [1908] tiles are the rule... in Badaga villages' (Francis, 1908, 130, compare Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 58; (432) Grigg, 1880, 29, 225; 'Geofry', 1881, 132). For the farming family engaged in marketing their crops, cash was necessarily the only medium of exchange, and much of their foodstuffs had to be (291) bought in the town bazaar. A great variety of items was also being purchased, the most obvious of which were new clothes: in the 1890s men first began to sport European-style shirts and jackets, and in the 1930s women started to wear coloured *sa:ris* (B.E.M.S., 1897, no. 58, 90; Hockings, 1979a).

We may say that their commitment to the cash economy was complete by about 1930, in which year most Badagas permanently severed their traditional exchange relationship with the Kotas. This from the Badaga point of view was an advantageous move, for it allowed them to buy pottery, ropes and metal goods in the bazaar at a lower price than the Kotas commanded, and without delays. While the Kotas had not been receiving cash, the traditional dole of grain they were given at each harvest was becoming

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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increasingly valuable to the Badagas because of rising grain prices (Mandelbaum, 1955, 240).

For many Badagas with small land-holdings the transitional period between the two World Wars was marked by the frustrations of indebtedness. Pieces of their land were sometimes sold to non-Badagas in order to pay off outstanding debts—a previously inconceivable practice. Some men went as far as the Annamalai Hills for manual labouring. Badaga debtors did, however, work hard to produce profitable cash crops or at least to buy back some of their former lands (Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 64; Ranga, 1934, 4; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249).

With the First World War, major changes in their marketing practices became apparent. Tea, coffee and cinchona, like potato, presuppose a market beyond the Nilgiris, which in turn presupposes adequate transportation. The crucial demand for vegetables to feed the numerous European troops in India, Burma, Malaya and Ceylon stimulated the change in crops documented above (see Table 2). Similar conditions arose again in the Second World War and prompted many more Badagas to try commercial farming. On each occasion cultivators took the risk of exporting potatoes and other vegetables to new and remote markets, and some made handsome profits (Francis, 1908, 167). The risks in this enterprise were real, for men could recall occasions when floods broke the road or rail connections or the goods reached their destination only after market prices had fallen heavily. The rewards of potato cultivation were, however, of critical importance in lifting the yoke of indebtedness: during World War II the British made a great deal of capital available to Badaga farmers, as part of the 'Grow More Food' campaign. This finance and the profits from selling their highly priced potatoes did more than any cooperative loan facility to relieve the indebtedness that Badagas had been suffering under for several decades.

While tea and coffee yield a higher profit per hectare than potatoes or grains, they are more susceptible to disease than the millets and require greater agricultural skill than all other Nilgiri crops if they are to attain the standards required by wholesale purchasing agents. Moreover they need to be produced in large enough quantity to warrant the processing and transportation to Bombay (since 1940, to Cochin). Middlemen, both Badagas and others, were therefore indispensable to the few Badaga tea and coffee growers of the 1920s and 1930s. Middlemen could act as a

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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control on quality and could bring together sufficient produce to make a transaction with an exporter worthwhile. As more and more Badagas became interested in growing cash crops, middlemen appeared not only to buy up small quantities of tea, coffee and potato but also to sell seed, fertilizer and even some insurance.

After Independence profiteering by the middlemen was largely checked by the Nilgiri Cooperative Marketing Society set up with state government aid (Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249). Today there are nearly two hundred cooperative societies in the Nilgiris which pool the resources of members and also supply cheap fertilizer. Many such societies own local tea-processing factories and warehouses and are dominated by Badagas. After 1957 heavy loss through potato disease caused a widespread shift to tea or coffee growing,[22] and in the 1970s large acreages have been devoted to growing a sturdy new German variety of cabbage which finds markets nation-wide. Both tea and cabbage are quite successful crops. The availability of help from the Central Cooperative Bank made these unexpected switches in crops possible, for otherwise the initial capital outlay and the small size of most estates would have rendered the new venture unfeasible. Several cottage industries have also helped diversify the rural economy over the past thirty years; in particular beekeeping, liquor distilling, milk sales, knitting and embroidery have provided new, regular sources of income for many hundreds of Badaga families.

The early twentieth century saw the rise not only of wealthy Badaga land-owners but also of large-scale labour contractors. A few men profitted by getting the contracts for gangs to dig pits for planting tea-cuttings, pick coffee-beans, build roads or construct public buildings in the district.[23] Less wealthy Badagas set themselves up as small shopkeepers, tailors or money-lenders or found work in a wide variety of urban trades.[24] Whenever possible the more resourceful reinvested their profits in land (Ranga, 1934, 10), either tea and coffee estates or farm plots formerly belonging to Kotas (Mandelbaum, 1955, 240). The other reinvestment commonly made was in college education for their sons. With the economy fully monetized the stress was now on providing stability for the coming generations.

MODERN EMPLOYMENT

Prior to World War I virtually all Badagas were cultivators, and

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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Badagas in more matters than marketing. They are now able to go to town frequently—typically once a week—and their children can attend high school or even college without losing much contact with the home. (Ootacamund has two colleges and Coonoor another, all three affiliated with Madras University.) Literacy and newspapers in Tamil have spread, too, in part because of the easy transportation system. The literacy rate is now seemingly higher in the rural Nilgiri Plateau than in Madras City: in 1963, 78% of adult Badaga males and 52% of females were literate, while in 1961 70% of Madras City males and 48% of females were literate.[12] Even old Badagas are often quite familiar with daily news stories, weather forecasts and even some political predictions (cf. Hockings, 1965 a, *passim*).

The cheap railway and bus services have made visits to the great pilgrimage centres of South India possible for thousands: the famous temples at Cape Comorin, Madurai, Palni, Tirupati and Tanjore now receive Badagas almost daily. Nor must we overlook the business trip: increasingly farmers as well as traders find it worth visiting cities when they have a harvest to sell or bulk supplies to purchase.

The modern cities and great pilgrimage centres can have two different types of psychological effect: a city shows the Badaga visitor profusions of consumer goods, among them new household devices, radios, watches, bicycles and cameras, as well as interesting foods, cloths and ornaments; the pilgrimage centre, on the other hand, stresses ties with the mythical past of South India, with the gods represented in the temples, with priestly authority and with the grand history of the temples themselves. It is an important distinction: the man who goes to a distant temple may come home with his attention focussed on the past and on separation of the self from worldly matters, whereas the man coming from a business trip may be full of a desire to buy some implement he has seen or try out a new skill or save money so that his son may attend college in the city.[13] This distinction between the conservative and the modernizing effects of travel is to some extent paralleled in the choice between mythical and modern film themes or between religious and secular magazines. Not all contact with the cities necessarily introduces people to modern ways of life; not all who patronize radio, films or periodicals are drinking at a source of non-traditional knowledge, for though the media may be modern the villager discriminates in what he derives from them.

178 greater agricultural skill than other Nilgiri crops if they are to attain the high standards required by company purchasing agents. Moreover, they need to be produced in large enough quantity to warrant the processing and transportation to Bombay.

178 Middlemen, both Badagas and others, were therefore indispensible to the few Badagas who had ventured into tea and coffee growing in the 1920's and 1930's. Middlemen could act as a control on quality, and could amass sufficient produce to make a transaction with an exporter worth-while. As more and more Badagas became interested in growing crops for cash, middlemen appeared not only to buy small quantities of tea, coffee and potatoes, but also to act as agents in selling seeds and fertilizers, and even insurance.

After Independence the profiteering in which these middlemen had indulged was finally checked. With state and central government aid, marketing cooperatives were set up in various parts of the Nilgiris to undermine the position of the middlemen by providing cheaper services (Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 249). Now there are cooperative societies which not only find markets and pool the resources of members, but provide cheap seeds, fertilizers and implements. Many such societies now own local tea-processing factories or warehouses.

Since 1957 heavy loss through potato disease has caused some of the potato-growers to plant their land with tea or coffee instead. The availability of help from the marketing cooperatives has made this sudden switch in crops possible, for otherwise the initial capital outlay and the small size of most estates would make the whole venture unfeasible.

Communications

Steady improvements in the transportation systems have facilitated the production and sale of cash crops. In the last century all goods had to be carried